

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 were originally presented for examination.

Claims 12, 13, 21 and 22 were previously canceled.

Claims 1-11 and 14-20 are pending in the present application.

Claims 1-11 and 14-20 have been rejected.

Claim 23 has been added.

Claims 1-11, 14-20 and 23 remain in the application.

Reconsideration of the claims as amended is respectfully requested.

The Applicant filed an amendment after final rejection in the present application on May 29, 2003. The Examiner entered the May 29, 2003 amendment. The Applicants submit a Request for Continued Examination (RCE) herewith.

The March 31, 2003 Office Action rejected Claims 1-6, 10-11 and 15-19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over United States Patent No. 5,436,886 to *McGill* (hereafter, “*McGill*”) in view of United States Patent No. 6,075,767 to *Sakamoto et al.* (“*Sakamoto*”). The March 31, 2003 Office Action also rejected Claims 7-9, 14 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the *McGill* and *Sakamoto* references in further view of United States Patent No. 5,715,237 to *Akiyoshi* (hereafter, “*Akiyoshi*”).

The Applicants respectfully submit that the rejection of Claims 1-6, 10-11 and 14-20 are moot in view of new Claim 23. The Applicants respectfully assert that Claim 23 contains unique and novel limitations that are patentable over the *McGill*, *Sakamoto* and *Akiyoshi* references, both individually and in any combination.

SUMMARY

No fees are believed to be necessary. In the event, however, that any fees are required for the prosecution of this Application, please charge any fees or credit any overpayment to Davis Munck Deposit Account No. 50-0208. No extension of time is believed to be necessary. If, however, an extension of time is needed, the extension is requested. Please charge the fee for the extension to Davis Munck Deposit Account No. 50-0208.

If any outstanding issues remain, or if the Examiner has any further suggestions for expediting allowance of this Application, the Applicant respectfully invites the Examiner to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below or at jmockler@davismunck.com.

Respectfully submitted,

DAVIS MUNCK, P.C.

Date: 2 September 2003


John T. Mockler
Registration No. 39,775

P.O. Drawer 800889
Dallas, Texas 75380
Phone: (972) 628-3600
Fax: (972) 628-3616
E-mail: jmockler@davismunck.com